

SOUTH PACIFIC – TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM

FACT SHEET #1, FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2015

MARCH 20, 2015

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

11

Confirmed Fatalities in
Vanuatu Resulting from
Tropical Cyclone Pam

UN Office for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) –
March 18, 2015

3,026

People Residing in
Evacuation Centers on
Efate Island, Vanuatu

OCHA – March 18, 2015

234,000

Estimated Number of
People in Vanuatu
Potentially Affected by
Tropical Cyclone Pam

(Reflects the Country's
Total Population as of 2009)
Government of the Republic of
Vanuatu (GoRV) – March 10, 2015

4,600

Estimated Number of
People in Tuvalu Affected
by Tropical Cyclone Pam

International Federation of Red
Cross and Red Crescent Societies
(IFRC) – March 2015

30,000

Estimated Number of
People in the Solomon
Islands Affected by
Tropical Cyclone Pam

IFRC – March 17, 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tropical Cyclone Pam brought heavy rains and damaging winds to several South Pacific islands.
- The USG has declared disasters in the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- USAID/OFDA staff are in Vanuatu to assess storm damage and coordinate USG response efforts.
- The international community is responding to humanitarian needs under the leadership of the storm-affected host governments.

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

FOR TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM
TO DATE IN FY 2015

USAID/OFDA¹

\$200,000

\$200,000

TOTAL USAID/OFDA
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR
TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Tropical Cyclone Pam formed in the South Pacific Ocean on March 9 and brought strong winds, heavy rains, storm surges, and floods to several island countries—including Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu—as it tracked southward over several days. In Vanuatu, the storm passed over the country's central and southern islands as a Category 5 storm on March 13 and 14, resulting in extensive damage.
- The remote location of many storm-affected islands and downed communications initially slowed assessment efforts, according to relief organizations. Responders are utilizing aerial surveys to assess damages in outer islands as they work to reach affected communities on the ground. Initial assessments indicate that Tropical Cyclone Pam caused significant damage to infrastructure, destroyed crops, and resulted in loss of livelihoods; however, overall fatality figures for the storm remain low.
- The international community is working closely with national authorities to respond to humanitarian needs resulting from Tropical Cyclone Pam. In accordance with the FRANZ Arrangement—an agreement on disaster relief cooperation in the South Pacific—the governments of Australia, France, and New Zealand are collaborating with Pacific Island nations to bolster international response efforts in the storm-affected countries, with additional assistance provided by other donors.
- As a part of response efforts, USAID/OFDA deployed two regional advisors based in the region to Vanuatu to assess the impact of Tropical Cyclone Pam and coordinate USG humanitarian assistance for storm-affected countries.

¹ USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)

VANUATU

- Beginning March 13, Tropical Cyclone Pam passed over Vanuatu's central and southern islands—including the national capital of Port Vila on Efate Island—as a Category 5 storm with sustained wind speeds of up to 170 miles per hour, according to the Joint Typhoon Warning Center. On March 14, the GoRV declared a state of emergency for Shefa Province, in which Port Vila is situated, due to storm damage, noting that the designation may be expanded to additional provinces following further assessments.
 - The GoRV and relief organizations report substantial difficulty in reaching Vanuatu's remote islands quickly to assess storm damage. Vanuatu comprises more than 80 islands, many of which are only reachable by boat. To facilitate response efforts, the FRANZ group, in coordination with the GoRV, is conducting aerial assessments to evaluate damages caused by Tropical Cyclone Pam in difficult-to-access areas. Simultaneously, response personnel are conducting on-the-ground assessments in reachable areas of Malampa, Penama, Shefa, and Tafea provinces.
 - On March 17, a USAID/OFDA regional advisor traveled to southern Vanuatu's Tanna Island, home to nearly 30,000 people, and an area struck directly by the eyewall—the part of a storm with the highest surface winds—of Tropical Cyclone Pam. Strong winds from the storm affected approximately 80 percent of all structures on Tanna and destroyed up to 50 percent of the houses. The island hospital in Lenakel, the island's largest town, sustained some structural damage, while extensive water damage affected equipment and supplies and left only one of the facility's four main wards usable. The storm's winds also damaged banana, coconut, yam, and other crops, severely affecting nearly all home gardens and other planted areas on the island.
 - In Port Vila, relief organizations report improving conditions as the GoRV and relief organizations work to restore services and provide assistance. Roads on Efate are increasingly passable, and many areas have access to restored electricity and safe drinking water. On March 19, USAID/OFDA regional advisors conducted an assessment of previously inaccessible areas of Efate, reporting that—amid obvious damage—the island's ring road is largely intact, as are many power lines, cell phone towers, and the majority of dwellings around the island.
 - Due to limited access and poor communication with remote islands, the GoRV and response actors are still assessing the full extent of Tropical Cyclone Pam's impact on Vanuatu's population. However, as of March 18, the GoRV had confirmed 11 deaths resulting from the storm. On Efate, approximately 3,000 people were residing in evacuation shelters, with some evacuees beginning to return home. On Tanna Island, an estimated 1,000 people were residing in schools. On Tafea Province's Erromango Island, where the GoRV reports that the storm destroyed more than 300 houses, approximately 1,300 to 1,400 people are either displaced, staying with relatives, or residing in badly damaged homes.
 - Assessments of accessible storm-affected areas indicate a need for food, safe drinking water, medical supplies, and emergency relief items—such as kitchen sets, tents, bedding, and hygiene kits—in some hard-hit areas, according to OCHA. In response to needs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other relief agencies are mobilizing assistance. For example, the UN World Food Program (WFP) plans to support GoRV distribution of food, as well as inter-island logistics activities to facilitate access to affected areas. NGOs and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) are working with the GoRV to provide water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance, such as water purification supplies, hygiene kits, and water containers.
 - On March 14, U.S. Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu Walter North declared a disaster in Vanuatu due to the effects of Tropical Cyclone Pam. In response, USAID/OFDA has provided \$100,000 through USAID/Philippines to the French Red Cross (FRC) to distribute emergency relief supplies, implement WASH activities in evacuation shelters, and support the return of evacuees to their homes. USAID/OFDA plans to contribute additional USG humanitarian funding in Vanuatu in accordance with identified response needs and gaps.
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TUVALU

- Between March 9 and 12, floods resulting from storm surges and sea swells triggered by Tropical Cyclone Pam caused significant damage to houses, public infrastructure, and agricultural land in the outer islands of Tuvalu. The worst-affected areas of Tuvalu include the northern islands of Nanumaga and Nanumea and the central islands of Nui and Vaitupu, OCHA reports.

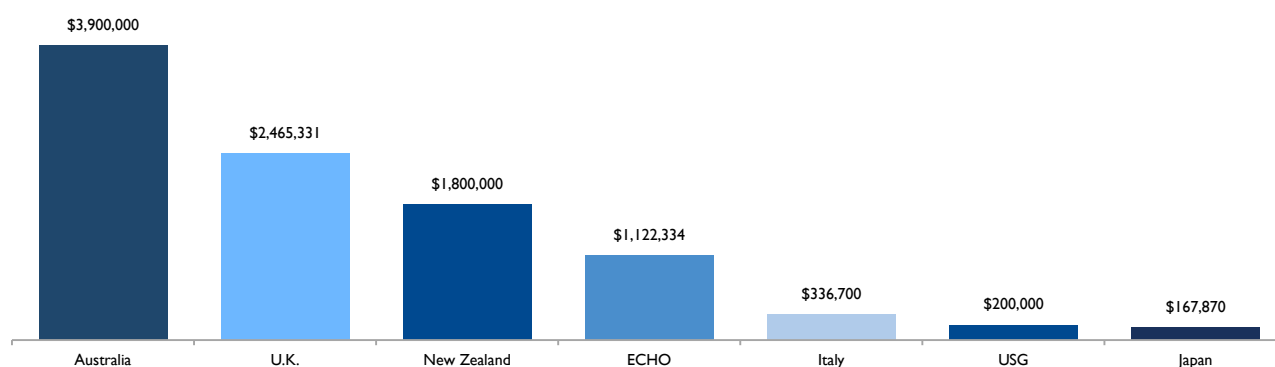
- On March 13, the Government of Tuvalu declared a nationwide state of emergency. According to IFRC, the storm has affected an estimated 4,600 people, representing approximately one-half of the country's total population. Based upon preliminary assessments conducted by government and Tuvalu Red Cross Society staff, IFRC reports a need for food, medical supplies, WASH and shelter support, and debris-clearing equipment in affected areas.
- According to IFRC, the Samoa Red Cross Society and the Fiji Red Cross Society have mobilized emergency relief items, including blankets and kitchen sets, for distribution by the Tuvalu Red Cross Society. OCHA notes that the boat transporting the relief items from Samoa will remain in Tuvalu and be used to support inter-island humanitarian distributions and assessments.
- On March 19, UNICEF airlifted a tranche of health and WASH supplies, including water purification tablets, vitamin A capsules, medicines, and medical supplies, from Fiji to Tuvalu. A second charter flight scheduled for March 21 will deliver the rest of the medical supplies, as well as shelter items.
- On March 15, U.S. Ambassador to Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu Judith Beth Cefkin declared a disaster in Tuvalu due to the effects of Tropical Cyclone Pam. In response, USAID/OFDA has provided \$50,000 to IFRC to distribute emergency relief items and offer basic WASH assistance to cyclone-affected households. USAID/OFDA also deployed a regional advisor based in the region to Suva, Fiji, to help coordinate response activities in collaboration with USG interagency staff, regional humanitarian actors, and other donors.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

- Between March 10 and 12, Tropical Cyclone Pam brought heavy rains, rough seas, and strong winds to the Solomon Islands, particularly in eastern areas. Per international media reports, Tropical Cyclone Pam destroyed some houses and vegetation in the country's easternmost province of Temotu, particularly affecting Anuta and Tikopia islands. As of March 17, the Government of the Solomon Islands had requested assistance for cyclone-affected populations in Guadalcanal, Isabel, Makira, and Malaita provinces, in addition to Temotu Province, according to UNICEF.
- The cyclone may have affected as many as 30,000 people in Temotu and Malaita provinces, IFRC estimates. To date, authorities have confirmed no casualties as a result of the storm. A recently completed government and NGO rapid assessment suggests food security, access of safe drinking water, and unsanitary conditions as areas of concern in cyclone-affected areas. Logistical constraints are also a challenge to response in the Solomon Islands, as reaching some remote islands requires two to three days of travel, OCHA notes.
- UNICEF has reported plans to provide WASH and other supplies, including collapsible water containers, soap, and water purification tablets, to the Solomon Islands. The UN agency expects to deliver essential items to heavily affected outlying islands via boat; any remaining stocks will then be pre-positioned at the Temotu provincial hospital.
- On March 18, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires for Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu Melanie Higgins declared a disaster in the Solomon Islands due to the effects of Tropical Cyclone Pam. In response, USAID/OFDA is providing \$50,000 to a humanitarian partner to assist the country's storm-affected households.

2015 TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING*

PER DONOR



*Funding figures are as of March 19, 2015. All international figures are according to OCHA's Financial Tracking Service and based on international commitments during the current calendar year, while USG figures are according to the USG and reflect the most recent USG commitments based on the fiscal year, which began on October 1, 2014. The majority of funding is supporting the response in Vanuatu.

**USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES
AFFECTED BY TROPICAL CYCLONE PROVIDED IN FY 2015²**

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
VANUATU			
USAID/OFDA ³			
French Red Cross	Logistics and Relief Commodities, WASH	Countrywide	\$100,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE			\$100,000
TUVALU			
USAID/OFDA ³			
IFRC	Logistics and Relief Commodities, WASH	Countrywide	\$50,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE			\$50,000
SOLOMON ISLANDS			
USAID/OFDA ⁴			
NGO Partner	Logistics and Relief Commodities	Countrywide	\$50,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE			\$50,000
TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM IN FY 2015			\$200,000

² Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

³ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of March 19, 2015.

⁴ Funding for the Solomon Islands has been announced and is in process.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at www.interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or +1.202.821.1999.
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int.

USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID website at
<http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis/where-we-work>